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"Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." II Cor. 6:2

Teaching Servant-Leadership in a Self-Serving World

by Dr. Tom Nisbett,
Vice President for Advancement

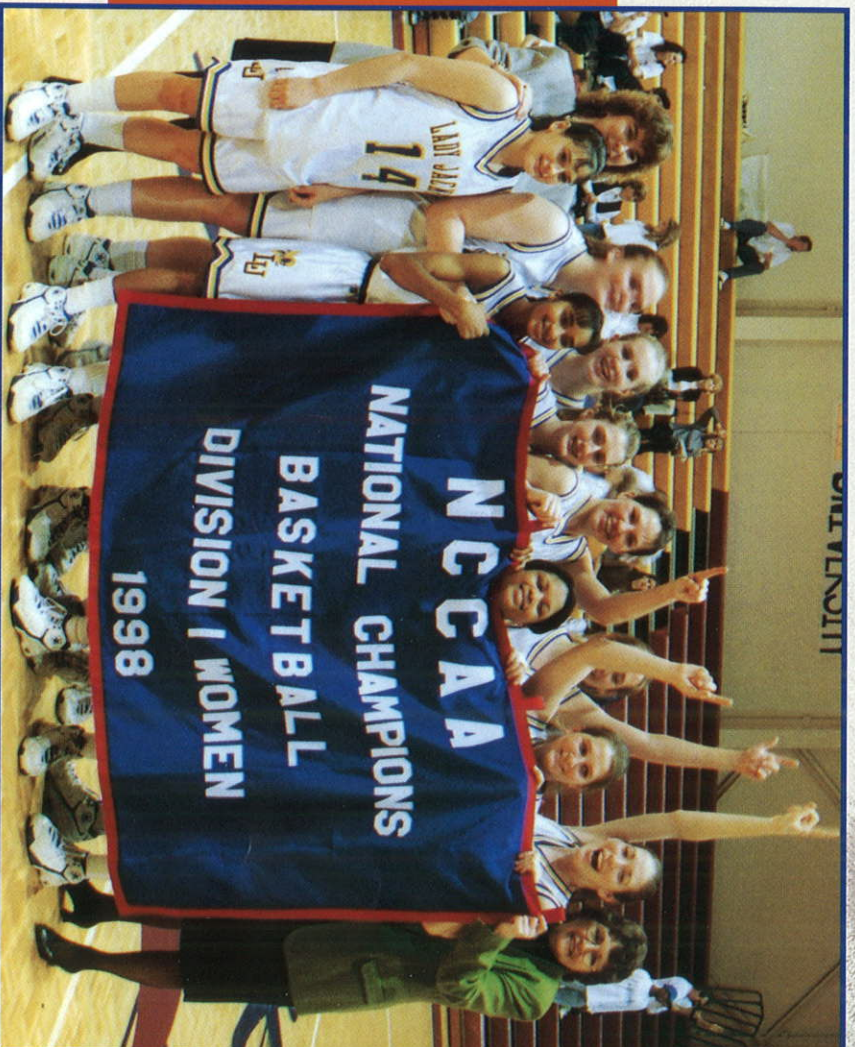
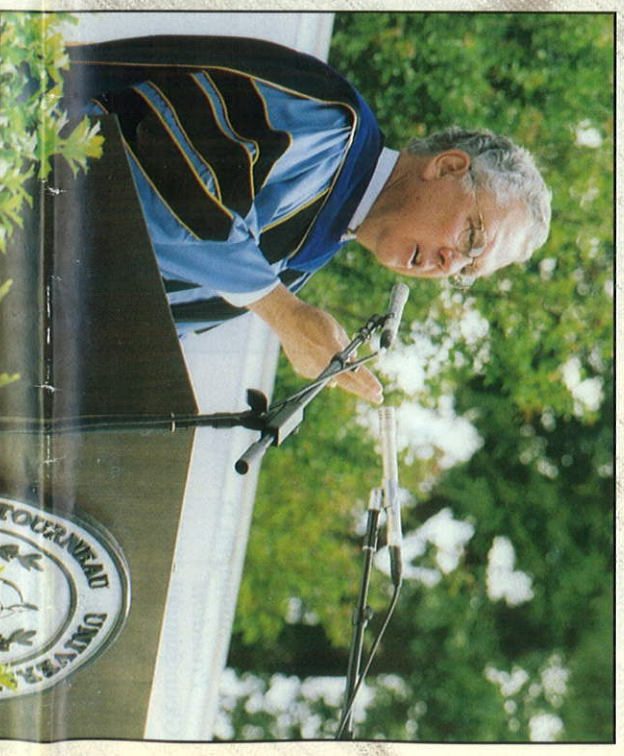
Dr. David McKenna knows about leadership.

Featured speaker for the Longview May commencement program, Dr. McKenna is the former president of two Christian colleges and president emeritus of Asbury Theological Seminary. McKenna has had a life-long interest in leading and studying leadership. His 40 years of study have produced this conclusion: to lead means to serve. A good leader is first of all a good servant.

McKenna, in his commencement address, spoke on the three qualities of a servant leader:

1. **BEING FAITHFUL** is more important than being successful. Success is good and is an admirable goal, but God judges faithfulness as the mark of a Christian.
2. A leader is **WILLING TO MAKE SACRIFICES**. Quoting noted missionary and teacher Dr. Frank Laubach, McKenna comments: "When I get to Heaven, God will not want to see my trophies, but my scars."
3. **HUMILITY**. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples—the job of the lowliest slave. "Being willing to use the towel," McKenna noted, "is the mark of a genuine leader."

In this issue of NOW, we look at ways LeTourneau University serves, and ways it develops servant leadership. A Christian education is not simply teaching secular courses with an overlay of chapels and classroom devotions. "It is an *intentional community*," as Vice President of Student Affairs Doug Wilcoxson notes, "where LeTourneau students are systematically prepared for a lifetime of Christ-like servant-leadership."



LadyJackets
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National Champs!
See page 9 for details.



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President's Message

Producing Servant-Leaders: a distinct approach to education

Students and their families increasingly scrutinize colleges. What makes the college distinctive? What are its unique qualities? Is it a good investment of time and money?

Without question, the cost of a college education makes a significant impact on family resources. People shop for the best value when they purchase a home, car, computer or insurance policy, so it makes sense to shop wisely for a college.

What is the value and worth of a LeTourneau education? I'm pleased when I get this question, because I believe the true value of a LeTourneau education is both economic and eternal.

The best way to assess LeTourneau is by the end product: the students who complete their education at the university. Leaders in business, industry, education and ministry have told me hundreds of positive stories about our graduates. They have experienced first-hand the extraordinary qualities of our LeTourneau grads. They seek me out to provide unsolicited testimonials about the quality of our academic training and the competent way our faculty has prepared our students. Graduate school admission rates, scores on professional competency exams and rankings by such groups as *U.S. News & World Report* also speak to the high level of academic achievement of our students.

Our goal is to produce servant-leaders. Our mission is to integrate a relationship with Jesus Christ into all we do.

The marketplace is looking for persons with these characteristics and employers place a high value on them.

The development of these characteristics doesn't happen accidentally. These value-added qualities are the result of very intentional programs and activities designed to produce servant-leaders.

Our goal is to produce servant-leaders. Our mission is to integrate a relationship with Jesus Christ into all we do. Each faculty member and every staff person is committed to the development of our students. They serve as role models of a Christ-centered life. They encourage positive emotional and spiritual growth. Our chapel programs, residence hall devotions, missions trips and community service activities all focus on developing servant-leadership skills. Hundreds of campus employment and program positions provide student-leadership opportunities. Growth is encouraged in the classroom, the residence hall, the lab, the athletic field and in every other part of our campus.

Is a LeTourneau education distinctive? Is it a worthy investment?

Absolutely!

P.S. Brothers Merle and David Stoltzfus, featured on this page, exemplify the kind of alumni LeTourneau seeks to produce. Their award-winning effort to produce a home that is beautiful, well-constructed and extremely energy efficient has brought them national acclaim. And, their personal lives reflect the servant-leader qualities we want to see in all our graduates.



Alumni Win National Energy Value Housing Award

Stoltzfus Enterprises, Ltd., co-owned by brothers Merle (ET '75) and David (MT '78) Stoltzfus, Elverson, Penn., has been awarded the prestigious Energy Value Housing Award by National Home Builders Association (NAHB) Research Center. The gold award for excellence in energy efficient construction was awarded for their project, Summerfield at Elverson.



David Stoltzfus, left,
Lisa Bowles, president of the
NAHB Research Center, and Merle
Stoltzfus.

One of the homes in
Summerfield at
Elverson.



LeTourneau.. “An Intentional Community”

Professors have an easy way to measure results: final examinations. Finals, along with other tests, quizzes, papers and projects, are methods teachers use to determine if a student has achieved the required level of experience and knowledge.

But social and spiritual growth are not so easily measured, and in the long run are just as important in the Christian college experience as any course or curriculum.

According to Doug Wilcoxson, vice president for student affairs, development of the whole student is not left to chance, but is part of a carefully constructed plan to help LeTourneau students grow into Christian leaders . . . to become true servant-leaders.

“LeTourneau is ‘an intentional community’ where we want to create growth opportunities in our students and help them integrate their faith into their learning and their living,” said Wilcoxson.



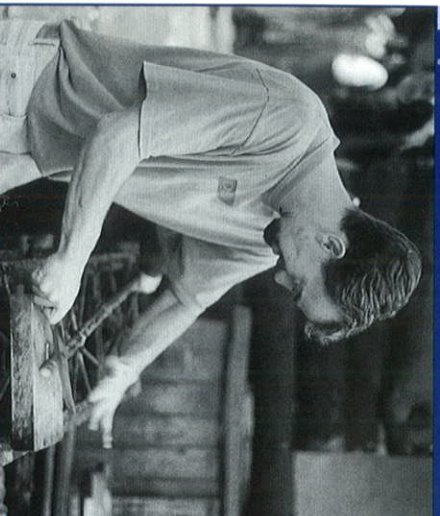
Doug Wilcoxson
Vice President for Student Affairs

The Office of Student Affairs has a three-pronged approach to student development:

1. **ACCESSIBILITY** – To be there to help students work through crisis experiences which create moments of decision. College can be tough; a first year student may be struggling with courses and thinking about dropping out. The student is encouraged to grow through this experience, not avoid it. A variety of ways are available to guide students through difficult times, rather than run from them. Growth is stunted if students avoid the very things God wants them to work through.
2. **DISCIPLESHIP** – To create pivotal moments of growth. For example, staff and faculty are not afraid to confront a student if they have habits or lifestyles which are not Christ-honoring. Discipline is never easy, the Scriptures make that plain, but it can be necessary. Nor are student development staff members afraid to use chapel times to help students stretch. The annual Missions Emphasis Week is well-known for radically changing a student's entire future.
3. **COMMUNITY** – To develop growth through service opportunities on and off campus. Traveling to San Luis Potosi and ministering with Action in Mexico will have a profound impact on the spiritual development of a student. Working with the homeless in Longview will develop a compassion no amount of classroom discussion could generate. Being a residence assistant on one of the hall floors will bring maturity and foster people skills.

Wilcoxson concludes, “Perhaps our Student Affairs Mission Statement says it best: We exist as co-laborers with the faculty for the primary purpose of serving students . . . to create an enhanced learning environment for the maximum development of the whole person.”

LeTourneau's most comprehensive service project is Action In Mexico, which occurs each year during Spring Break and includes more than 100 students, faculty and staff ministering in several locations in central Mexico. Participants pay their own travel expenses, work on construction, drama or orphanage teams, and live with Mexican host families for a week.



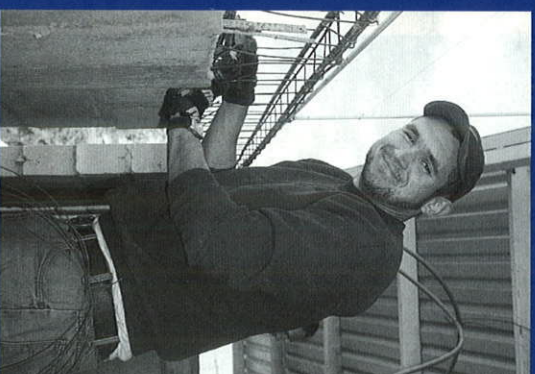
Abe Pace works on a church project in Huejutla.



Angela Howard and Bianna Ray cut re-bar in Aguascalientes.



Rachel Dirrell with her host family from the Huejila church.



Brian Boyle sets re-bar in Aguascalientes.



Joel Peterson helps dig a septic hole for the church at Santa Maria del Rio.

The Mission of LeTourneau University

“LeTourneau University is a co-educational, interdenominational Christian university built upon a foundation of biblical authority, which seeks to glorify God by integrating faith, learning and living. Recognizing that all knowledge comes from the Creator, the university helps students develop a maturing relationship with God, encouraging them to know Him through His son, Jesus Christ.”

Student Service Opportunities

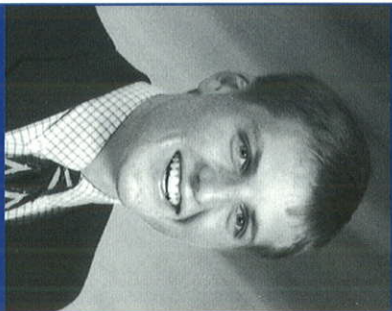
Note: This is a brief listing of service opportunities that LeTourneau students have available to them.

- Action in Mexico
- Church Lay Leadership
- E-mail Buddies
- Green Street Mission
- Habitat for Humanity
- Kings Garden
- Living Alternatives
- Newgate Mission
- Nursing Homes
- Reading Buddies
- Resident Assistants
- Spring Break Missions
- Missions Trips in the U.S.A.
- Stand in the Gap
- Student Impact Volunteers
- Student Foundation
- Summer Missions Trips
- Themelios
- Tutors and Lab Assistants
- Walk for Life
- West End Ministry

LeTourneau University

N • E • W • S B • R • I • E • F • S

LeTourneau University students shine in national and regional academic competitions



Michael Merritt, Jr.

In Memory of Michael Merritt, Jr.

The faculty, staff and board of trustees extend their deepest sympathies to the family of Michael Merritt, Jr. Michael died May 13 as a result of injuries sustained in an accident. He was 21.

Merritt was the son of Mike and Teresa Merritt of Kilgore and the nephew of Texas State Rep. Tommy Merritt, D-Longview. Born in Longview and raised in Kilgore, Merritt graduated from Kilgore High School in 1995 and was an accounting major at LeTourneau. He was taking summer school courses at the time of his death.

A memorial fund has been established by the family to honor Michael's memory. Contributions may be made to LeTourneau University for "The Michael Merritt Memorial." For more information, please contact John Martin, director of development, at (800) 259-5388.

Science and engineering students at LeTourneau University excelled this spring in a variety of national and regional intercollegiate academic competitions, earning four first place or best presentation awards, a second place and the university's best-ever showing in the national Aero Design contest.

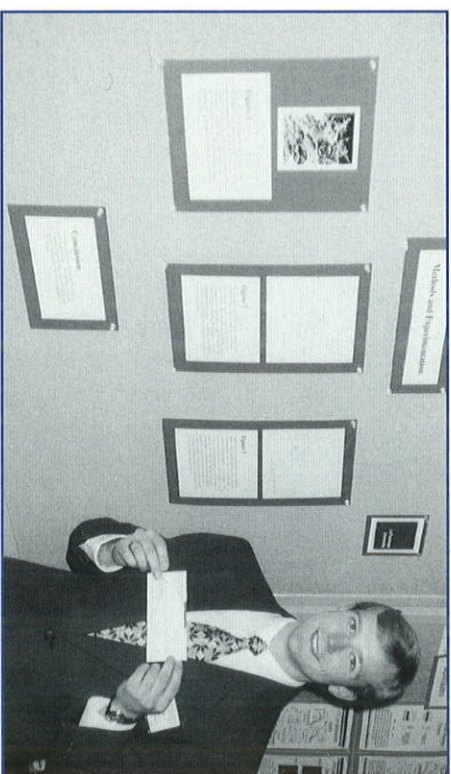
Douglas Walden, a junior from Oblong, Ill., took home best student presentation honors and a \$250 prize at the Colloid and Surface Chemistry section of the national meeting of the American Chemical Society, held in Dallas this spring. Walden, a chemistry major, made a presentation on "The Effect of Geometry on Contact Angles of Water on the Surface of Fibrous Silica Tile." Walden analyzed aspects of chemical coatings used on NASA's Space Shuttle heat tiles. His work was partially funded by the JOVE Division of the National Space and Aeronautical Administration and the Welch Foundation. "I am particularly proud of Doug's presentation, because he was competing against graduate students from universities all over the nation," said faculty sponsor Dr. Douglas Ford, professor of chemistry.

Scott Warren, a senior from Hamden, Ct., took dual awards for his research on artificial muscle, earning first place in oral presentation and best technical presentation honors at the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Region 10 Conference, held at Texas A&M University. ASME Region 10 covers university engineering programs in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas,

Oklahoma and the nation of Mexico. Warren, who is an electrical engineering major, presented on the topic: "Fuzzy PD Control with Simulated Proprioceptive Feedback of Disproportionately Loaded Artificial Muscle Actuators in a Dual Revolute System."

Fellow engineering students Adam Culver and Ian Morrison, also doing

of mechanical engineering, Gonzalez noted that the success of LeTourneau students in the competition "demonstrates that their education and undergraduate research is on par or better than the students who come from some of the major well-known schools in the Southwest."

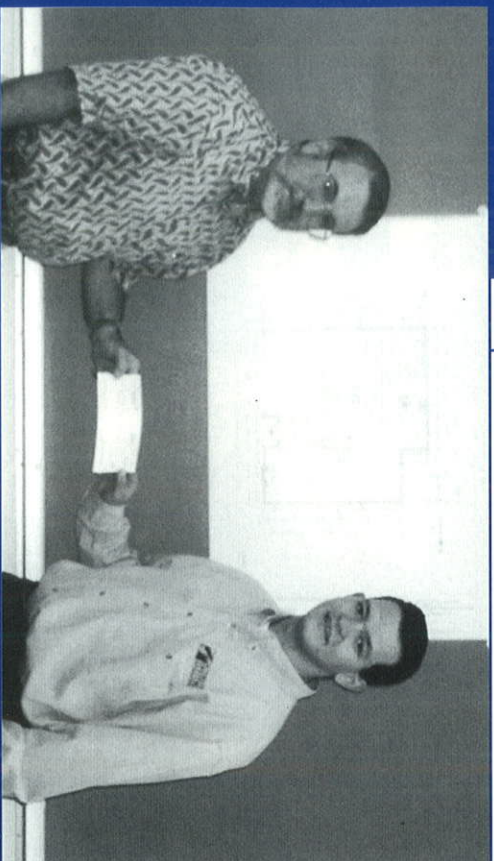


Doug Walden holds his prize check for "Best Student Presentation Honors" at the Colloid and Surface Chemistry section of the American Chemical Society national meeting. Walden was one of 10 students who took prestigious awards in national and regional intercollegiate academic competitions this year.

research on artificial muscle, took first and second place honors in the technical poster competition. Culver, a senior from Syracuse, N.Y., was awarded first place for his presentation called "Mechanical Characterization of Polyacrylonitrile Fibers: Comparison with Human Muscle Performance." Morrison, a senior from Oakville, Wash., was awarded second place for his research entitled: "Dynamic Control of Artificial Muscles Across Two Human Elbow Joints." The faculty advisor for Warren, Culver and Morrison was Dr. Roger Gonzalez, P.E., assistant professor

A team of six students, sponsored by Dr. Bill Thrasher, P.E., professor of mechanical engineering, took 7th place in the Eastern Aero Design Contest. Competing against 28 different college teams from around the nation, the LeTourneau team designed, built and flew a remote controlled model cargo plane capable of lifting more than three times its own weight.

Members of the LeTourneau team included team captain Heather Campbell, Peter Baba, Jason Boss, Amy Griffin, Steve Kautzmann and Paul Triplett. Faculty advisor Thrasher noted that the LeTourneau entry's 7th place showing could have been even better: "We came very close to taking second place. After a successful take-off, flight and landing that brought us to 7th place, we tried again with a significantly higher cargo weight. The plane successfully took off and flew the course, but crashed on landing. If the plane had landed we would have been just behind the winner, Embury-Riddle University, the host institution for the contest," said Thrasher.



Alfredo Suarez, right, a senior aviation technology and design technology student at LeTourneau University, won a \$500 scholarship for a house design sponsored by the East Texas Builders Association, based in Longview. Suarez designed the home as an assignment for an architectural drafting course at the university. According to James Williams, left, president of the association, the award-winning design "displayed exceptional work in a variety of areas, including floor planning and traffic flow." His design featured a combination kitchen/dining area, a large master bedroom with bath and a bonus second floor room.

Hillcrest Foundation makes \$50,000 grant

The Dallas-based Hillcrest Foundation has given a \$50,000 grant to LeTourneau University, announced LeTourneau President Dr. Alvin O. Austin. The grant will be used to purchase scientific equipment for a chemistry lab in the university's planned Center for Engineering, Science and Technology.

According to a foundation official, the trustees of the Hillcrest Foundation unanimously approved the grant to LeTourneau University. The foundation was founded by Mrs. W. W. Caruth, Sr. to provide financial support to qualified charitable organizations in the State of Texas for the advancement of education, the promotion of health, and the relief of poverty. Over the past two decades, the Hillcrest Foundation has given LeTourneau almost \$400,000.

"The Hillcrest Foundation's support of LeTourneau University's new building reflects their continuing generous support of quality education for the citizens of Texas. We are honored to again be beneficiaries of the support of this outstanding foundation," Austin said.

LeTourneau University

N • E • W • S B • R • I • E • F • S

LeTourneau graduates 454 in Longview and Houston commencement services

LeTourneau graduated its largest-ever group of students in commencement ceremonies held May 2 in Longview and May 9 in Houston.

The university graduated a total of 454 undergraduate and master's level students. The previous record for a spring graduation was set in 1996, when 425 earned degrees.

The Longview commencement was held on the front lawn of the campus, with nearly 3,000 guests on hand to celebrate the graduation of students from the Longview campus and

educational centers in Bedford, Dallas and Tyler. Dr. David McKenna, president emeritus of Asbury Theological Seminary, was the commencement speaker.

The Houston commencement was held at Metropolitan Baptist Church, Houston. President Alvin Austin was the featured speaker. More than 1,000 guests attended the program.

The 454 graduates came from throughout Texas, 26 states and nine foreign nations. LeTourneau has more than 10,000 alumni from all 50 states and 55 nations.

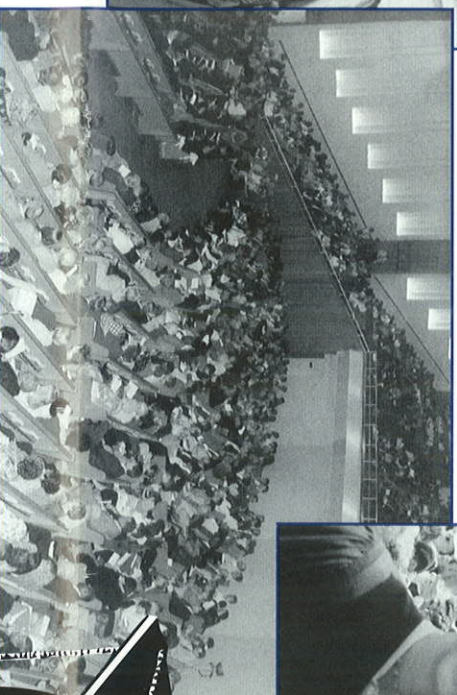


Jeanne Bennett Reifel, graduating with a bachelor's degree in aeronautical and aerospace science, design technology option, sports a mortarboard that celebrates her studies: an airplane taking off from a runway.



David Shoudong Li, White Oak, prepares for his master's hood. Li was one of 53 graduate students to earn their master of arts degree.

Elaine Roberts, right, and her daughter Kimberly, graduated together. Both earned a bachelor's degree in business management. Elaine completed her program in Longview, while Kimberly studied at the Dallas Educational Center. "As far as we know, this is the first-ever mother and daughter reports Bill Gibbs, director of university relations.



Metropolitan Baptist Church in Houston was near capacity with more than 1,000 guests on hand to view the Houston commencement program.



Dr. Yoni Adonyi named to LeTourneau University's Omer Blodgett Chair of Welding and Materials Joining

Dr. Yoni Adonyi, an internationally recognized leader in the welding industry, has been named to LeTourneau University's first-ever endowed chair: the Omer Blodgett Chair of Welding and Materials Joining Engineering, according to Dr. Alvin O. Austin, LeTourneau University president. He was previously professor of welding engineering at the university.

Adonyi earned a bachelor of science degree from Timisoara Polytechnical Institute of Romania, and a master's degree and doctorate of philosophy in welding engineering from Ohio State University. He has served on the LeTourneau faculty since 1996, and is director of its welding engineering program.

He has conducted research for national and international entities such as the American Iron and Steel Institute, the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board of Texas. A noted lecturer, he has traveled widely throughout the U.S. and overseas as a conference presenter. The Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) honored him for his excellence in oral presentation in 1991. He has authored or co-authored more than a dozen scholarly articles and papers, and holds leadership positions in the Welding Research Council and the American Welding Society.

The Omer Blodgett Chair of Welding and Materials Joining Engineering has been a \$700,000 initiative to endow a permanent professorship in welding engineering.

It honors Omer Blodgett, a pioneer in welding engineering and long-time employee of the Lincoln Electric Company, a leader in the welding industry and the Chair's largest donor. Additionally, the Chair is being funded through the gifts of more than 325 other companies, foundations and individuals.

The endowed professorship in welding engineering is an important step for the university and the welding industry. It is both LeTourneau's first-ever endowed chair and is the nation's first-ever endowed chair in the welding engineering field.

"As the first named Omer Blodgett Chair, I am thankful to all our alumni, friends and corporate partners that have contributed to the endowment. I consider it an honor and privilege to be in a position to promote Christian education and welding engineering," Adonyi said.



Dr. Yoni Adonyi, left, with LeTourneau President Alvin O. Austin. Adonyi is the first-ever LeTourneau professor to be named to an endowed chair, and the first to hold the Omer Blodgett Chair of Welding and Materials Joining Engineering.

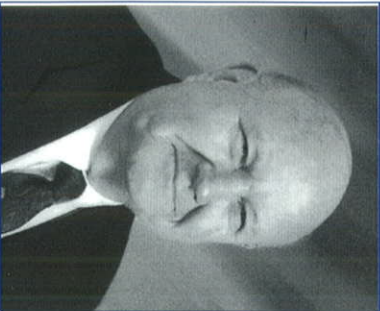
LEADING THE WAY: three faculty members honored for outstanding effort



Dr. Martin Batts, professor of English, philosophy and biblical studies at LeTourneau University, was chosen as the university's nominee for the Piper Professor Award given by the Mlinne Stevens Piper Foundation. The Piper Professor Award is given on a statewide basis each year to outstanding faculty at two-year or four-year colleges and universities.



Martin Donner, assistant professor of aerospace science, will serve as the chair of the university's Teaching Faculty Organization for the 1998-99 academic year.



Dr. Dannie Tindle, professor of business administration and chair of the Department of Business Administration has been named professor emeritus. Tindle, who came to LeTourneau in 1988 after an illustrious career in the Air Force, retired this spring.

WANTED: 2,000 alumni and friends

The university has announced an ambitious plan to enlist the support of 2,000 alumni and friends who will support LeTourneau's Annual Fund by joining one of eight "giving clubs" and participating in supporting the general needs of the campus.

Called "Target 2000," the effort focuses on the new millennium, and also sets a goal to develop a group of 2,000 alumni and friends who will give to the Annual Fund.

Giving levels begin at the Centurion's Club for gifts between \$100 and \$249, and advance through President's Circle Gold which recognizes unrestricted Annual Fund gifts of \$10,000 or more.

"What we are praying for is 2,000 alumni and friends who will join us as Target 2000 Annual Fund Giving Club members," reports Dr. Tom Nisbett, vice president for university advancement. "We need folks who are committed to the future growth and development of LeTourneau through regular contributions to the University's Annual Fund, which is used to meet unrestricted budget needs throughout the campus."

All alumni and friends who annually give \$100 or more are included in the Giving Clubs, and will be honored in a variety of ways throughout the year.

"As we have developed new buildings, we have focused on the need for funding to pay for their construction. Target 2000 is for those donors who wish to support our general needs, such as books for the library, new equipment and upkeep of the campus and educational centers. Gifts to the annual fund have a direct impact on our operation and help us to keep tuition costs as low as possible, making a LeTourneau education a reality for many more students," concludes Nisbett.

For more information and a Target 2000 brochure, contact our toll-free donor services number at 800-259-LETU or call (903) 233-3160.

Giving Levels



Target 2000

Centurion's Club
\$100 - \$249

Inventor's Club
\$250 - \$499

Partner's Club
\$500 - \$999

President's Circle
\$1,000 - \$2,499

President's Circle Bronze
\$2,500 - \$4,999

President's Circle Silver
\$5,000 - \$9,999

President's Circle Gold
\$10,000+

Heritage Club
Individuals who have established lifetime income agreements with LeTourneau or have listed the university in their will with a gift of \$1,000 or more become members of the Heritage Club.

We are praying for 1,500 men and women who will commit to the following:

To give to LeTourneau University unrestricted gifts totaling \$100 or more annually.

To promote the mission of LeTourneau University among their friends, families, businesses, churches and communities.

To pray for the university, faculty, staff and students.

We are praying for 500 men and women who will commit to the following:

To give to LeTourneau University unrestricted gifts totaling \$1,000 or more annually.

To promote the mission of LeTourneau University among their friends, families, businesses, churches and communities.

To pray for the university, faculty, staff and students.

Centurion's Club
Our goal: 1,000 members

Inventor's Club
Our goal: 300 members

Partner's Club
Our goal: 200 members

President's Circle
Our goal: 300 members

Bronze
Our goal: 100 members

Silver
Our goal: 75 members

Gold
Our goal: 25 members

The university pledges to all our giving club members to provide accurate and timely receipting information, regular news updates and giving club recognition awards.

(CLIP AND MAIL)

YES, I WANT TO BE PART OF TARGET 2000.

☐ Please enroll me in the following Target 2000 Giving Club Enclosed is my ☐ one time ☐ monthly gift of \$_____

☐ Centurion's Club \$100 - \$249

☐ Inventor's Club \$250 - \$499

☐ Partner's Club \$500 - \$999

☐ President's Circle \$1,000 - \$2,499

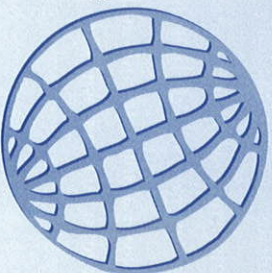
☐ President's Circle Bronze \$2,500 - \$4,999

☐ President's Circle Silver \$5,000 - \$9,999

☐ President's Circle Gold \$10,000+

☐ Send me more information about how I may also join the Heritage Club

Phone _____



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make all checks payable to: LeTourneau University.

LeTourneau University • P.O. Box 7333 • Longview, TX 75607

Gifts to LeTourneau University are tax deductible.

GRADUATE, ADULT CONTINUING STUDIES DIVISION NEWS

LeTourneau to serve Northeast Houston through "University Connection"

LeTourneau University has entered into a cooperative agreement with two branches of the University of Houston and the San Jacinto College District to jointly serve the educational needs of Northeast Houston adult students through a "University Connection" on the campus of San Jacinto College North in Houston.

San Jacinto College, a well-respected community college in the Houston area, began working with three area universities, including LeTourneau, to develop an upper division and graduate center where area students could continue their college educations without having to travel across Houston (a city noted for its horrendous traffic problems) or moving out of the area.

Dr. Robert Hudson, vice president of graduate, adult and continuing education, represented LeTourneau at the signing ceremony, which took place this spring.

LeTourneau will offer two bachelors-level and two masters-level degree programs beginning this fall. The university has been serving the Houston area since 1993.



Dr. Robert Hudson, vice president for graduate, adult and continuing studies, signs a cooperative agreement with officials of the San Jacinto College District, the University of Houston Downtown and the University of Houston Clear Lake to form the "University Connection," an upper division and graduate center on the campus of San Jacinto North. The agreement allows LeTourneau to offer two bachelors-level and two masters-level degree programs in Northeast Houston, opening an area previously underserved by the university.

Service through encouragement: Graduation of first-ever Texas Instruments — Sherman class shows power of supporting each other

There are 17 LeTourneau students who enjoyed graduating so much they participated in two different ceremonies. Like more than 300 others, they participated in LeTourneau's official Longview commencement program, but they also participated in a smaller, more personal program designed just for them in Sherman, Texas.

Just over two years ago, in May 1996, the group enrolled in the first-ever LeTourneau University class held at Texas Instruments in Sherman, Texas. The members of Class 219, all employees of Texas Instruments, began a bachelor of science in business management program together. On a beautiful spring day in late April, they gathered to be honored by LeTourneau and TI at a reception hosted by the Sherman Site Training Council of Texas Instruments.

About 200 co-workers, friends and family members watched as the class members were acclaimed. Also honored at the ceremony was Vernice Hicks, director of human resources for TI. Hicks was instrumental in bringing LeTourneau to Texas Instrument and encouraging students to enroll in the on-site program.

"We are very grateful to Texas Instruments, and to Ms. Hicks, for the wonderful cooperation given to the students and to the program," said Bob Geiman, director of LeTourneau's Dallas Educational Center.

According to Betty Kesterson, Dallas coordinator of student services, Class 219 developed a very strong support and encouragement system that motivated each class member to stick with the program and graduate. "Of the 16 original class members, only one person did not complete the 23-month intensive program. And after the class was formed, two students joined the group, so Class 219 actually ended up larger than it began. This demonstrates how successfully these students supported and served each other. Their graduation really was a team effort," said Kesterson.



Bob Geiman, director of LeTourneau's Dallas Educational Center, offers congratulations to the Sherman graduates as Betty Kesterson, Dallas coordinator of student services, looks on.



Sherman graduates pose for a shot. Pictured are: (back row, l.-r.) Alan Nunley, Phil Williams, Jimmy Morrow, Shane Boddie, Curtis Linson, Bruce Peterson and Ray Rhodes. (middle row, l.-r.) Sara Butterworth, Charlene Edwards, Brenda Hemperley, Mark Fontz and Roy Raimierz. (front row, l.-r.) Amy Vandeventer, Beverly Houghton, Karma Nichols, Kathy Jones and Maria Henegar.



The program included plenty to eat.

"Third Thursday Forum" Serves Metroplex Alumni

"Dallas/Ft. Worth alumni tell me that they have greatly appreciated the monthly 'Third Thursday Forum.' It's a way to hear exceptional business and industry leaders and meet with other alumni on a regular basis," notes Bryan Benson, director of alumni relations.

"Third Thursday Forum" speakers have included John Dwyer, managing editor of the "Dallas/Fort Worth Heritage," one of the largest Christian newspapers in the nation; Buddy Pilgrim, president of Pilgrim's Pride, a multi-national poultry processor; and Dale Crowmover, (BSBM '97) president of Texas Nameplate Company and a national expert on continuous quality management.

More than 50 alumni, adjunct faculty and staff members typically gather for the Forum, which is held at the Dallas Educational Center.



BY JOHN INMAN, DIRECTOR OF
SPORTS INFORMATION



BLANCO TO LEAD FIRST-EVER WOMEN'S SOCCER PROGRAM

Pedro Blanco, a native of Colombia and a member of the Colombia National High School Soccer Hall of Fame, is the first women's soccer coach and men's and women's tennis coach at LeTourneau University.

The soccer program will be installed into the athletic program next fall and the tennis program in the spring of 1999, giving LeTourneau 10 sports as it heads into NCAA Division III and the American Southwest Conference.

Blanco, whose experience includes coaching at the Division III level, said, "The number one goal is recruiting. We don't need to recruit superstars, but we need to recruit somebody who can show we are serious about a good program. Number two, we need athletes who will stay in the program four years and graduate at LeTourneau University."

Blanco has most recently been men's and women's soccer coach at Missouri Valley College in Marshall, Mo. He previously was men's and women's soccer coach at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash. He also served as men's tennis coach at Whitman, as well as men's and women's tennis coach at Brescia College in Owensboro, Ky.

Blanco, 46, also has a wealth of international playing and coaching experience in soccer. He represented Colombia in the 1971 Pan American Games, the 1970 World Cup Eliminations and the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City.

Blanco is an active member in the American Soccer Coaches Association, United States Soccer Federation and the United States Tennis Association. He will also teach physical education classes at LeTourneau.

Blanco and his wife, Kathi, have one child, Andrew.



Pedro Blanco will serve as LeTourneau's first-ever women's soccer and men's and women's tennis coach.



Todd Jouett (22) after game-ending home run.

BASEBALL ENJOYS ANOTHER 20+ WINNING SEASON

A lack of leadership proved to be only a minor obstacle for the LeTourneau University baseball team and coach Dr. Elliot Johnson to overcome this spring.

Thanks to some timely hitting and a lot of runs, the Yellowjackets completed the season with an impressive 30 - 17 - 1 record. All this happened after losing two of the top players in the school's history to graduation a year ago. Mike Huffman holds most of the hitting records and Todd Johnson, now an assistant coach for the team, was one of the top all-around players to wear the Blue and Gold.

"I'm proud of the way the guys have hung together and made themselves a good team. We have plenty of room for improvement, but we have had a good season and made some progress," Johnson said.

First baseman Todd Jouett, a junior college transfer, showed a great deal of promise at the plate. He hit eight home runs, banged out 12 doubles and drove in 35 runs the first 34 games to go along with his .365 average. Left fielder Joey Richards, who came from Howard Payne University, had a .351 average with four homes, 20 RBI, 41 runs scored and 14 stolen bases.

Another junior college transfer, Terry Buse, owned a 7-1 record and four saves as a relief specialist. Jouett and freshman Jason Swann each had five victories on the mound.

Veteran catcher Ben Johnson enjoyed a solid season with a .296 average, 30 RBI and duty behind the plate 33 times the first 34 games.

YELLOWJACKETS EARN BERTH IN POSTSEASON TOURNAMENT

Everyone knew it would be tough: a transitional coach, lack of a winning tradition and many unseasoned players all combined to keep expectations low. Add to that a schedule best described as "murderer's row" (it included Division I foe Stephen F. Austin, and several Division II schools) and even the most optimistic were daunted at the season's prospects.

The dismal expectations were justified early on, as the Jackets suffered through a nine-game losing streak.

By the time Big State Conference play began, however, the Yellowjackets had gone through not only a learning but a developing process, and went on to win five of their first eight conference games and gain a berth in the postseason tournament.

One of the victories — 93-86 in Solheim Arena — was over regular-season and postseason tournament champ Huston-Tillotson. It was the only game H-T lost in conference action.

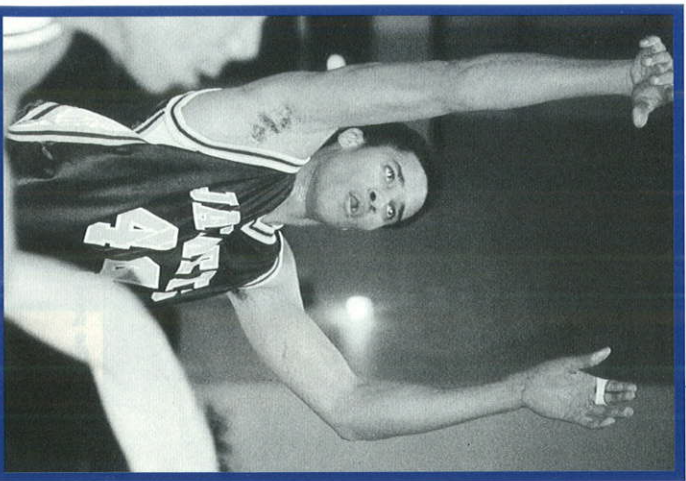
"Everybody had a lot to learn, but through hard work we all survived some rough times and had a pretty representative team late in the season," said coach Robert Davenport, working in a transitional role which would have him at LeTourneau only for the '97-'98 season.

A 108-100 overtime loss to Wiley in a game where the Jackets held a 16-point lead may have been devastating down the stretch, and the season ended in back-to-back road losses at Huston-Tillotson.

New head coach Bernie Balikian, who will be featured in an upcoming issue of the NOW, loses only one player, Jeff Surratt, and has an optimistic outlook for next season.

Stephen Cyrus earned All-Big State Conference honors and enjoyed a much-improved sophomore season after showing great promise as a rookie two years ago.

Other returning players include Brian Pace, Geo Haines, Mark Malone, Joe Young, Kendrick Brooks, Justin Witt, Jeremy Williams, Steve McDaniel and Todd Culver.



All-Conference performer Stephen Cyrus shoots a free-throw.